

SENATE RESOLUTION 150

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend LeMoyne-Owen College  
on the occasion of its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should honor those historic institutions of higher learning that have provided exceptional educational opportunities to the citizens of Tennessee for decades; and

WHEREAS, LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis is once such estimable institution that is truly worthy of our respect and commendation as it celebrates its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, commemorating the historic milestone as a yearlong celebration of "Purple Reign"; and

WHEREAS, LeMoyne-Owen College traces its roots back to 1862, when it began as an elementary school for freedmen and formerly enslaved African Americans shortly after federal troops occupied West Tennessee. The school, originally named Lincoln School, moved to Memphis in 1863, was destroyed by fire in 1866, and was rebuilt in 1867; and

WHEREAS, three years later, Dr. Francis J. LeMoyne, a Pennsylvania physician and abolitionist, donated \$20,000 to the American Missionary Association (AMA) to build an elementary and secondary school for prospective teachers; the AMA allocated the money for Lincoln Chapel, which was renamed LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School in 1871; and

WHEREAS, LeMoyne became a junior college in 1924 and a four-year college in 1930; in 1934, the college was chartered by the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in 1947, the Tennessee Baptist Missionary and Education Convention initiated the plans for Owen College. In 1954, the school was opened as S.A. Owen Junior College, in honor of a distinguished religious and civic leader; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, Owen College secured accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and offered two-year associate degrees in general education, business, home economics, and religious education; and

WHEREAS, in 1968, LeMoyne College and Owen Junior College merged to become Lemoyne-Owen College, a private, historically Black, four-year, co-educational, liberal arts institution in Memphis that provides a transformative experience educating students for urban-focused leadership, scholarship, service, and professional careers; and

WHEREAS, notable alumni of LeMoyne-Owen College include Benjamin Hooks, former executive director of the NAACP; Lois DeBerry, the first female Speaker Pro Tempore of the Tennessee House of Representatives; Dr. Larry Robinson, president of Florida A&M University; Bert Maynard Roddy, Memphis businessman and civil rights organizer; W.W. Herenton, former mayor of Memphis; Marion Barry, former mayor of Washington, D.C.; Annie Marie Watkins Garraway, mathematician and philanthropist; Lloyd Barbee, Wisconsin legislator and civil rights activist; and Myron Lowery, former mayor of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, as the administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni celebrate 160 years of educational excellence, it is most appropriate that we recognize LeMoyne-Owen College on this auspicious occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and commend LeMoyne-Owen College on the occasion of its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary, extending our best wishes for much continued success in the college's ongoing commitment to excellence in higher education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.